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July 27, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator McConnell:

As the Senate debates health care reform, I urge the Senate to consider a simple, bipartisan proposal I have proposed for years which would allow Americans the opportunity to purchase health insurance through the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHBP).

Since 2009, I have regularly introduced the *Access to Insurance of All Americans Act* to give the American people the same health care choices the authors of the repeal of the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* (ACA) had – robust coverage options through FEHBP. Its advantages are many, including the choice of multiple high-quality private health insurance plans, portability across jobs and state lines, required coverage for pre-existing conditions, and a prohibition on lifetime and annual limits.

As the Senate looks for additional options to replace the ACA, opening the federal plans for all Americans would be comparatively quick and simple to implement: it is an already working coverage model, with more than a dozen nationwide plan offerings, tens of dozens of state plans, and millions of enrollees creating a large, relatively healthy risk pool for a base.

This plan is not a new concept and historically has bipartisan appeal. Such a simple plan could go a long way to help deliver the consensus needed on this long-standing goal. In 1980, the late Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) said, “if health insurance is good enough for the president, vice president, and the Congress of the United States, then it is good enough for all of you and for every family in American.”ⁱ

Similar plans have been supported across party lines. Both former Secretary Hillary Clinton and former President Barack Obama supported the idea while on the campaign trail in 2008, with then-Senator Obama even promising to provide every American with “the option of buying into the same kind of federal pool that both Senator McCain and I enjoy as federal employees.”ⁱⁱ Other supporters of the idea have previously included former Minority Leader Bob

Dole (R-Kan.), former Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.), and conservative think tanks like Heritage Foundation.

By giving all Americans access to the same health coverage provided to federal employees and their families, we can address the primary concerns on our constituents' minds, namely: access, quality and assurances for those with pre-existing coverage. I urge your thoughtful consideration of this replacement option to the repeal of the *Affordable Care Act* so no American is left without the same high-quality options federal employees and their families have enjoyed for years.

Sincerely,



Darrell Issa
Member of Congress

ⁱ Senator Kennedy of Massachusetts, speaking at the 1980 Democratic National Convention, on August 12, 1980.

ⁱⁱ Senator Obama of Illinois, speaking at the Hofstra University Presidential Debate, on October 15, 2008.